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APA Policies:

- Minac (Minimum level of activities required) is two somethings per year.
- Issues will be mailed the first week of even-numbered months, so contributions must reach me by the first day of said even-numbered months. Things which reach me late will be held until the next scheduled mailing.
- The next deadline is August 1st, 1992.
- The copy count is twenty-two (22).

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TRANSPORTER
TOPICS

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Number 67

Mailing Comments

Crumbcrunchers: (Much of this is franked from a letter) Yes, I write nonfiction. Not only have I been writing "The Joy of High Tech" in Low Orbit for the past several years, I recently had the first of two parts for an article on high-speed flight appear in Pyro.

I am amenable to writing a fact article on the martial arts. I am a certified instructor, and have references available, both written and verbal. And I love to show off! (To put it a bit immodestly, at least three people have suggested that I offer to perform a martial arts demonstration at Rivercon some time.)

Besides the martial arts, I write about technology and its history, possible future developments, conventions and gaming. I actually a professional in the field of gaming... well, about as professional as anyone ever gets! What I mean is, that I have written material for which I have actually (!) received money (!!) in return. (Of course, they never finished paying me.)

No, I don't have an agent. In the first place, you don't need one until you are selling well enough to require professional help to get the most out of your contract. In the second place, most agents won't accept a new writer until after he or she has sold at least one piece. Be careful, here. Several writers and publishers unintentionally became agents by promoting books written by friends and acquaintances.

Listen, having cats around can complicate things. I can imagine (with little trouble, since I sometimes help with my sister's pair) what actual children would be like. *

I get numbness and tingling in my hands, as well, plus pain, but in this case it is due to nerve damage from several injuries (not karate related). This sort of injury isn't curable yet, but can be treated with aspirin. This is one reason I can't draw well, and often drop things. *

You need to get Dora her own seat for the bicycle. One of those that attaches to the luggage rack. This will lower her weight and reduce the upsetting force she causes. *

Dr. Gonzo: Lexington is about 80 miles from Louisville. I don't recall Jim Payton. There are at least three fannish organizations in the river city, so that isn't surprising. I don't go to Midwestcon. No, you weren't at Marcon. (-: *

Vadose Zone: I stopped in Dayton on the way back from Marcon (see below) and visited the Air Force Museum there. Not only do they have an SR-71 and a YF-12, but also the sole surviving XB-70! Zoom! *

At the Last Possible Second...: A married couple I know is moving to Long Island, because the husband finally got a job (there isn't much call for biochemists these days) and that is where it is. The company flew them in for a week of house hunting, and they found something suitable, though expensive. Meanwhile, their house in Lexington had to be made ready to sell. Several long-term projects (like putting in a proper bathroom) had to be rushed to completion, and members of LexFa turned out to help. (It helps to sell a house if the toilette is level and there is a sink nearby.) Now he is in Long Island and she has to stay behind until the house is sold. *

Marcon

I just got back from Marcon, in Columbus, and am rushing to finish this issue. The con lasted 4 days this year, and I stayed an extra day so that I could return by way of Dayton and visit the Air Force Museum. I had a grand trip, but barely got back in time to vote that evening. I'm still exhausted, partly because my mother asked me to move furniture for her ("If you don't move it tonight, your grandmother will have to sleep on the floor."). And tomorrow I have to substitute for my karate instructor and teach 2 two-hour classes. Then I have to teach another two-hour class the day after that! And then I have to go to a family reunion!!! I think I'll spend next week in intensive care.

Still, I have Sunday off, and will devote it to catching up on my correspondence and doing deferred maintenance on the house and car. That should help a lot.

At Marcon I met a few people I hadn't seen in a while, and missed some that used to go there. Oh, well, it has been four or five years. *Sigh.* I ran into a woman I had met before, and we hit it off very well. On Sunday, we wound up in her room, looking at her sketch book and talking. This eventually resulted in the two of us, with the lights out and two candles lit staring out at the city and talking. Unfortunately, the arrival of several fire trucks put an end to this romantic interlude. By the time the elevators were working again, her roommate had arrived. The three of us talked a while longer, then I went back to my room and to bed.

Dr. Gonzo's...

Valli Hoski
to ApaTech, May 1992,
who is still temporarily on assignment in Indianapolis at
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Yup, same format. Just haven't gotten around to reading the user manual to figure out how to change it.

The Wright thing to do

The third weekend in May always finds me in Oak Park, Illinois for the annual Sacred Event known as Wright Plus. For those who are architecture aficionados, this is a much beloved opportunity to get inside some pretty famous Victorian, Prairie, and related style homes. Oak Park, Illinois has one of the largest collections of Prairie style homes and buildings (over 33 of them) in one geographic location. A neighboring suburb, River Forest, also has an excellent group, as does Riverside. Frank Lloyd Wright built his own home, then his architectural studio and offices and lived actively in Oak Park from 1889 to about 1909. An annual housewalk opens selected homes to the public and offers a rare chance to view and tour these private residences. I've been involved with the local Frank Lloyd Wright foundation in Oak Park since 1982. Even while I lived in Europe, I've tried to remain involved with the annual tour and have only missed about 2 so far.

Imagine trying to coordinate this effort: 10 private residences and 2 public buildings in 2 different suburbs to be toured by about 3200 people in 1 day. You will need about 500 volunteers, before, during and after, to make this happen successfully. And the people that make it happen, year after year, success story after success story, are friendly, enthused but ordinary citizens. Corporate America could learn a lot about

empowerment, minimal management and quality service from these people.

The logistics and operations are impressive. Major committees exist for the tour, each house and related events. The general tour committee includes overall management, publicity, ticket sales and transportation/traffic. Each house has a house captain and about 20-25 tour guides. Related support includes the preview party before the tour and the volunteer reception after the tour and the bookstore and souvenir sales support.

Is there life out here
after all?

How do you move 3200 people effectively and efficiently through this day? Simple. Let them do it themselves. There are two basic ways to coordinate a group: military formation or football

crowd. For smaller tours, an escorted group of 10-25 works best with 2-3 dedicated tour guides and a bus. With 3200, put the tour guides in the houses and let the people roam the streets. Trying to escort 3200 people in a military parade through Oak Park just won't work. Rather, give the people tickets, the game plan and schedule and let them find their way to the football stadium and their seats. Concentrate the volunteers on manning the parking lots, setting up the game, and selling the souvenir books, and most importantly, playing the game in each house. Or, more simply, give the public their tickets and tour brochures.

To start, set up each house with its own tour operations. Schedule bus service and provide transportation volunteers to guide people on the streets and parking lots. Maintain communication and monitor all sites during the day. Pre-tour preparations include

cleaning and polishing the homes (with the homeowner's permission and help), putting down plastic runners, marking off the tour route with red ribbons, adding flowers and such to create a nice atmosphere. And be ready for the volunteers home walkthrough the night before the public tour. Don't forget the streets: put up bus stop signs and the parking restrictions. Post-tour tasks include removing all tour debris (dead flowers included) from the homes, taking down all street stuff. Better yet, the party starts provided the art center was reserved, the food ordered and the band booked. And when the partying is done, pack up the stuff and put it away. 500 volunteers? Seems like thousands.

On actual tour day, there are 4 main centers of activity. Let's follow some friends through their day on the tour and the volunteers they meet along the way. First, assume that Keith and Renee, Peter and Bill have ordered their tickets in advance. They arrive in 1 car, ready to do it the Wright way. First, they find a convenient parking garage with the map sent by *Publicity* along with their tickets from *Sales*. They see a friendly face by the parking garage, wearing a garish bright orange sunshade and safety vest. This *Traffic volunteer* shows them to the most convenient parking area and how to get to the Visitor's Center to get their package of tour goodies. Since they started early, their car is parked in the shade and off they go. Another friendly face from *Tickets* greets them at the center, and gives them the tour brochure, eats guide and local map. Now here are some difficult decisions: to buy postcards, books and souvenirs now while the selection's great or get them later (and not have to schlep the stuff around all day). Tour first, buy later advises the *Bookstore/Souvenir volunteer*, as the shop is open late after the tour. Great advice agrees the group and they are on their way to their choice of the houses. They pick House #1 since it's an easy walk. Upon arrival, they are greeted in front of the home by the *Sidewalk Coordinator* who welcomes them to the tour, introduces the house and the general neighborhood. Perhaps they wait a few minutes, and are joined by another group of 4 and 2. Together, these 10 people are shown into the house where the *Tour Guide #1* brings them in the front door and

describes the key architectural details of home's entry way, living room and/or front salon. They then proceed to the dining room area where *Tour Guide #2* presents the relevant details. Then they might go upstairs to the grand stairway and bedroom/bath areas where *Tour Guide #3 and #4* present their relevant rooms. Next it's downstairs again and to the kitchen and/or sun room areas as presented by *Tour Guide #5*. Finally, it's out the back door, past the gardens and a possible *Tour Guide #6* to offer commentary and watch your step advisory. Now, let's go over to River Forest and look at houses 3 through 9 there.

Consult the map or ask the *Sidewalk Coordinator* for the nearest bus stop. Walk over to the bus stop, chat with the *Traffic volunteer* until the bright yellow school bus arrives. Climb on board and listen to the *Bus Tour Guide's* explanation of the neighborhood, homes seen along the way and how to arrive at the next homes on the tour. Get off the bus, assisted by another *Traffic volunteer*. Follow the map, and complete touring the homes and buildings much as described above. Don't forget to ask the nearest *Traffic volunteer* where the closest bathroom is, where's a good place for lunch or dinner and when's the last bus leaving? Don't forget to stop at the bookstore to get souvenirs. Select a t-shirt, coffee cup or postcards for the gang back home. Chat with the *Bookstore volunteer* for a good biography of Frank Lloyd Wright or a nice picture book of the homes you just toured. Maybe join the Frank Lloyd Wright Home & Studio Foundation through the *Membership volunteer*, to get a discounted rate on next year's tour. Finally, at day's end, amazed by the homes, the architecture and the lovely details, retrieve the car and head back home, checking with the *Traffic volunteer* for a route to avoid the traffic. Or, stop and have dinner at that great place suggested by one of the many local "experts" you've met during the day.

That's the story of 4 friends. Multiply it by about 800 such groups, and you've got the Wright Plus public.

Those are the faces of the public that I saw this year as a Traffic volunteer. In years past, I've seen more of them, Americans, non-Americans, tourists, students, architecture fans, locals who've never been inside their next-door neighbor's mansion before, regulars who have made the pilgrimage each year. They are all different in their own culture and outlook. They are all alike in their enthusiasm and enjoyment of the homes.

There's no way to lose this day. Everyone's a winner and we all have a good time. If it rains, we laugh and complain together. If it's sunny, we get sunburned and hot together. And when the lines are long, we tell jokes, trade stories about our hometowns and discover mutual friends in our 1000s of miles apart lives.

During the past 10 years, I've done inside work, outside work, sales work, coordination work. I've explained living rooms, dining rooms, sun porches and bedrooms for homes from Victorian and Queen Anne styles to Prairie and something-or-other-Moderne schools. I've recommended books, postcards, t-shirts and Frank Lloyd Wright reproductions. I've sold tickets, answered phones and mailed brochures. I've directed traffic, flagged down buses, kept people from getting run over by cars as well as recommending my favorite local restaurants and panning those with bad service or surly waiters. Above all, I've been constantly renewed by the general niceness of people, basked in their smiles and shared enthusiasm.

This year, I worked outside as a Traffic volunteer, handling parking, bus stops and knowing where the nearest bathroom was. The day flew by, I saw old friends, made new ones, traded stories about the houses and learned a few new facts and lots of new factoids. Preview night (Friday) of the homes for the volunteers was splendid; this year's homes were nice, a few Prairie, some Victorian and Queen Anne. The star was a new Prairie Revival built last year, and faithful to the last horizontal brick and leaded glass window. Peter came along, as always, even though he missed out on ice cream at Petersen's (most recommended dish: a caramel sundae with whipped cream and a cherry, roasted pecans on the side.) The

party Saturday night was fun, a joy to see the familiar faces from last year and much anticipation of the tour next year.

It is one of the happiest times of the year for me.

And you thought that all I did was railroading.

N8QVT, standing by

N8QVT, a 1x3 call sign of a radio amateur. Country of issue: USA. Level of license: Technician. November 8 Quebec Victor Tango.

Or, perhaps more appropriately, N 8 Quick Valli Talk!

During the Indy 500 extravaganza, I'll be assisting with radio communication for the local Red Cross. Local hams are providing coordination and support services for the Red Cross during the Indy 500 parade this year. So I'll be out there, watching the parade, but also lending a hand on the 2 meter band with KA9WGP Joa (my husband), and others. Public service, support, education, that's ham radio. A lot of good camaraderie.

Ham radio is very similar to sf fandom. Enthusiasts sharing their talents, jokes, knowledge and lives. I'm a relative newcomer, having been licensed in Nov. 1991. But the community and the hobby already have my heart. Right now, I'm limited to local communication and can't really operate over long distances. But it's still fun and valuable. Someday, I'll talk with Europe too. But why ham radio? Let me tell you some exciting stuff.

Ham radio in the US sent a nice valentine out on February 14, 1991, but without a dit or dah of Morse code. The new codeless license went into effect. Prior to that date, you needed to pass a 5 word/min Morse code test and an introductory theory test to be licensed as a ham. Now, you need to pass a two-part test on the operating procedures of amateur radio and technical theory of radio communication. That's it.

With this new class of license, you can operate a ham radio in the two meter band frequencies and up. This means you can transmit voice and other types of transmissions from about 50.0 MegaHertz and up, in the frequencies allotted to amateur radio operation. Or, you can transmit in the 6 meter band, 2 meter band and shorter bands.

Due to the way radio waves work, most of your communication from 144 MHz and up will be short distance. This means, for voice communication, that you can talk with someone over the air in your local area, say 1-5 miles. Or, if you use a local repeating station, within about 20 miles. You will not be able to talk over the long distances that ham radio is known for.

Long distance radio communication usually occurs in the "lower" frequencies or the "longer" bands. This is where all the exciting stuff happens, or so they say. Take a 10 meter long radio wave, that makes it about 30 feet. This radio wave operates at about 30.0 Megahertz frequency.

Why? Well, radio waves move at the speed of light. That's about 300,000,000 meters/second. If you have a radio wave that is 1 meter (3 feet) long, it will "occur" about 300,000,000 times in 1 second; or, it will have a frequency of 300,000,000. A radio wave that is 2 meters (6 feet) long will "occur" more times in 1 second than a radio wave that is 10 meters (30 feet) long. If a wave travels 300,000,000 meters/second and is 2 meters long, that wave will occur approximately 150,000,000 times in a second (300 mt./2 mt.= 150). If the wave is 10 meters long, it will occur about 30,000,000 times.

This tells us what the frequency of the radio wave is, with a little approximation. "Hertz" means the frequency of the radio wave. For example, that 1 meter wave has a frequency of 30,000,000 hertz per second, or 30,000 Kilohertz (1 Kilohertz=1000 hertz). The 10 meter wave has a frequency of about 30,000 kilohertz, or 30 MegaHertz (1 MegaHertz=1000 kilohertz). The 2 meter wave has a frequency of about 144 MegaHertz. Remember, I said approximately; the approximate 150,000,000 frequency is actually 144,000,000 or 144,000 kilohertz or 144.0 MegaHertz.

One last factoid: "bands". Yes, you can dance to them. In fact, the bands are the radio waves that transmit your favorite station's broadcasts. The length of the radio wave can be 1 meter, 2 meter, 10 meter (pick a number, any number ...), etc. This has come to be known as the "band". For example, you might have heard of short-wave broadcasts in the "10 meter band" or other bands operated by various countries, such as the BBC for the UK, Voice of America by the USA, Deutsche Welle by Germany. Why are both "bands" and frequencies used to describe a radio transmission? Because a radio wave can be 2.0 meters long, or 2.0001, or 2.0002, or 2.135 meters long. Rather than talk about the fractions of the wave's length, the corresponding frequency is used. So, instead of 2.0, 2.0001 or 2.135 meters, the frequency of 144.0 MHz, 144.025, or 145.75 MHz is used.

Back to long distance radio communication. The shorter wave lengths, such as 2 meter or 1.25 meter or .7 meter (known as 70 centimeter), operate for short distances but do not carry over long distances. There are exceptions, especially when magnetic activity in the atmosphere helps to carry radio waves further (radio amateurs love aurora borealis weather, sometimes). Longer radio waves, such as a 10 meter, 20 meter or 30 meter long wave, will carry further and allow transmissions over longer distances. So, if you want to talk to someone who is more than 30 miles away, from 300 to 3000 or more, you'd better use the longer wavelengths, such as 10 or 20 meter band.

To transmit in the "higher" bands (above a specific range in the 6 meter band) or the "lower" frequencies (say, less than 50.0 MegaHertz), you need a particular license. And that license requires you to know Morse Code.

So, today, N8QVT is happy with local communication over the 2 meter and 70 cm bands. Thanks to local repeaters, I can talk with my local buddies on my hand-held radio transceiver. It looks like a walkie-talkie, but is more powerful and valuable.

Someday, when I want to reach out with long distance communication, I'll need to know Morse code. And then I'll upgrade my license to operate in the higher bands and lower frequencies. But for now, this N8QVT, operating usually mobile, on her local repeater.

When the moon fills the sky, like a big pizza pie, it's ...

SF.

You can try to take the fan out of sf, but you can't keep the sf out of the fan. Or something like that.

I've been down here in Indy, right? I've done some local things, like ham radio and the train group, mm-hmm. I've taken some intro German lessons too, ja sure you betcha (obscure Chicago fandom joke.) I've not gone in search of fandom, cons, cults, zines, or comic stores, fer sure. And the darned stuff still flies into my lap.

It's not like I've GAFIAted, per se. But General Technics is probably 99% of my contact with fandom these days. And that is maybe, 10% of my time. The rest is ham radio, railroads, architecture, friends ...

Anyway, so there I was last week, chatting with my German teacher Kathy, about life, travel, friends, family and Europe. She is a rather unique character, bright, quick of wit, flexible, entertaining to talk with. We'd shared a good many stories on travel, foreign cultures, international perspectives, world traveler vs. tourist, etc. during the past 2 months. Inevitably I mention my community of my heart in Chicago, where my heart really is at home and safe with my eclectic group of friends, engineers, scientists, railroad consultants and all. At the name of Fermilab (national accelerator laboratory, buffalo park and technological playground) and my buddies there, Kathy asks (as Murphy is definitely out to lunch...), do I know a Todd and a Mary Lynn...*ping, ping-ping-ping, bells/whistles and other special FX, please*. Fandom strikes again.

Turns out that Kathy is the best friend of Mary Lynn Skirvin (GT, Chicago; fannish artist of some renown in the midwest; overall good person). And Bill Higgins (ukulele

player, talented guy, physicist/engineer and a real sweetie; GT, Chicago) told me a long time that I had to meet her and her hubby, two nifty Indy folks. Well, I guess I did. The odds are scary though. I took German class, somewhat randomly, in a strange city, from an informal program, had a good time, got to know some locals. Never would've thought that fandom's long reach would put me in the 1 class of the local fan I was supposed to meet.

Oh, yea, about Kathy's dad, Mr. Sandstrom. SF fandom, not really. Mystery fandom's his game. He and I had a lovely chat about the local scene and mystery community. He reviews mysteries locally, writes columns and knows a bunch of people in that particular fandom. He even gave me a fan to contact in Dallas (my probable next assignment). Interesting point: the Moffats (known to some sf fans and readers) are a real organizing force behind mystery fandom. Also known in sf circles, the Moffats apparently were key in the growth and evolution of mystery fandom and its accouterments today (like Bouchercon, etc.) Indy also has 2 specialty bookshops for mysteries, some local writers, and hops a lot more than those soybean fields ever show.

Other Factoids and Rumors

Route 40

In April, Joa and I traveled part of old route 40 (the National Road) when we attended a ham radio convention in Dayton. There are towns along 40 which are older than you'd think. Some buildings date back to the early 1800s. It is remarkable to think that the northern midwest, especially the industrial cities on the waterways (i.e. Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland) were settled and developed differently than the more agricultural areas just 90-100 miles south. I'd often wondered about the vague southern accent of north central Indiana and Ohio. The National Road explains it. Before the railroads, the canals and rivers provided the main route for pioneers to the midwest. The National Road was first constructed to Wheeling to open up the interior to pioneers. It was later extended through Ohio, Indiana

and Illinois. Along came the pioneers who settled their farms and built their towns, quite independently of the growth to the north. By the time the railroads had expanded and connected these areas, the towns, farms and residents were long established. That explains, sort of, the Appalachian characteristics of the mid-central accent. (Disclaimer: this is all hand-waving postulation.) But Route 40 is a neat road, although less scenic (and less publicized) than Route 66.

The Peculiar Evolution of Star Trek: The Next Generation

ST:TNG seems to have the same freedom of plot that M*A*S*H evolved into. After 8+ years of episodes, MASH was no longer required to tell sitcom stories. Rather, it could and did have more "metaphysical" or philosophical episodes. Characters, such as Hawkeye, spent the entire episode examining a moral or personal question. The episode ending didn't necessarily resolve the question. I've noticed that ST:TNG moved quickly into this motif. Being SF, there are plenty of convenient means to dress up the story line (bug-eyed monster costumes, this week's rubber mask for ugliest alien, or more wispy non-clothing costumes for the male or female lead of the week). The classic themes are still addressed: love interest, aggression, conflict, mysteries, new weird life forms. Other themes have broader treatment than in the original ST: racial differences, gender differences, man vs. android, magic vs. technology, nature vs. technology, war vs. peace, etc. Episodes become occasionally philosophical, melancholic or brooding. Resolution might occur or might not be feasible for the circumstances.

One obvious theme is Data's perpetual search to become more human in his behavior. Another is Picard's continuous efforts to balance the Prime Directive of non-interference with his personal compassionate nature and gut reaction to helping the underdog. The questions that this generation's episodes ask are not always answered, neither superficially nor directly. Ryker doesn't always get the girl; in fact, he has killed her in the line of duty (the episode with the warring clans). Picard doesn't

always defeat the bad guy; in fact, he gets captured, brain-washed and defeated (the Cyborg episode) or just draws a stalemate (the fake Romulan defector episode). Deanna Troi doesn't get Ryker nor each cute guy; she gets hurt and used or hurts someone and has to walk away (many episodes, such as the telepathic negotiator episode or the mental rape episode). More substantially, ST:TNG has the freedom to ask open-ended questions and not have to define the answer in 60 minutes. It, like M*A*S*H, has been given this license to "ask what no one has asked before..." based on the momentum of the show's public acceptance and popularity. (Platitude alert!) ST:TNG is an evolution from ST, rather than a copy. More than changes to the special FX and costumes, there are more profound aspects: the questions considered, the conflicts presented and the answers not found. We are the next generation of ourselves asking who are we, where have we come from and where might we arrive and who will we become next.

That's that for now. See you next month. I think I'm going to a project in Dallas in mid-June, so watch for reports of a Yankee in Texas.

I have also wired my car to operate HF now. And I must compliment SUBARU for having shielded all the sensitive parts of their LEGACY very effectively against stray radio frequency (RF). Stray RF seems to be a serious problem with many cars; in some cases as little as 5 watts can muck up the electronics. I have talked to SUBARU before attempting my installation, and they had little concern. But I have also, albeit my mistake, put the car's shielding to an extreme test. I transmitted 100W FM into an antenna that was sitting in the backseat because I forgot to put it on the roof. The car happily chucked along without missing a beat until I finally found out why nobody would answer my call. 100W RF is no trivial matter: it is enough to give a nasty skin burn and within a radius of a few yards it will keep all unshielded electronics from functioning properly. Kudos for SUBARU for building a great hammobile.

From the car I have been operating as far as the Cayman Islands (100W FM) but also had several contacts closer to home. It is a wonderful feeling to drive the streets of Detroit, which are pretty boring, while entertaining a conversation with some other person in a different area of this country. While driving to a bookstore in Southfield, I have recently chatted with a retired minister in North Carolina. And the biggest bonus is DX reception. Since my HF device is also an all band receiver, I can now choose to hear short-wave radio while driving. Listening to BBC from London, or to the Deutsche Welle (Germany) relais station in Antigua is now quite easy. I have done that repeatedly while driving between work and home. On the "flatlands" of Indiana I have even been able to hear RAI (Italian Radio) from Rome. RAI is not always easy to hear because that station has a relatively weak signal (100kW) and no relay that I know of.

The other thing I am pursuing unfortunately is in direct antithesis to the mobile HF operation. Monitoring the airwaves for TTY stations and communicating TTY is best done from a stationary base. TTY stands for teletype and the word is intended to globally encompass all machine readable HF communication modes. In Dayton I have found a pretty good deal for a PK232, a modem-like device that interprets such machine readable codes. For want of a silly, but hard to get 13 pin DIN plug, I have been able to only monitor some of the strongest incoming signals. The plug is required to allow two way communication and to make the pickup more sensitive. As it is right now, just by playing around, I have been able to copy the Maghreb News Agency (Morocco) teletype bulletins. Therein lies much promise.

"HOW ARE YOU DOING?"

This is an ubiquitous expression of the English language. Indeed, it is so commonly used that it has become idiomatic. I still remember when I learned this expression at school. Coming from a native tongue that is pretty much down to earth when saying things, replacing what in my opinion should have been "Good morning" or "Good evening" with "How do you do?" struck me as remarkable. Today, of course, I am very much used to it, but I still note this expression as being peculiar.

Unless the relationship immediately degrades to a "Hi!" or "Howdy!" with backslaps, the expression "How are you doing?" is the proper way to open a conversation with a stranger in North America. The curious thing is, however, that no proper response is expected. By reflex, we typically respond: "Thanks I am fine, and you?". But have you ever changed this response? You should, it's fun!

The safest bet is to talk about something entirely different. For example, talk about the weather. I have done it, it's worth the experiment and it's quite harmless just in case the other party is more attentive than you thought. It goes something like this: - "How are you doing, sir?" - "The weather is disgusting!" - "Great, me too." This exchange is so

ritualized that the other party almost always fails to address the unexpected response. At the very best, the individual becomes flustered later in the conversation, but by then it is too late to remedy. After a brief hesitation the conversation keeps flowing as if nothing happened.

There is also a less obvious way to breaking the mold. Do not change the topic, just change the expected response from positive to negative. Invariably, it leads to confusion. This would be something like: - "How are you doing, sir?" - "Lousy, I've got a cold." - "Great, me too." Now, this is a nasty trick to play, because it really makes the other person feel bad. The remark is personal and good etiquette requires that it be addressed. On the other hand, it can give you an incredible conversational advantage: while the other party feels guilty he or she may shut up for a while.

Anyway, my point is clear. Try it out, you'll see: it works.

Cheers, always yours,

Joachim

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Our lives have taken a distinctly interesting turn lately. I'm working full-time with Dave now; my title could range anywhere from "General Factotum" to "Chief Cook and Bottle Washer" to the one I dreamed up which sounds the most professional "Public Information Coordinator." I'm learning to use Microsoft Word and Timeslips; Accountant, Inc. is next.

The children go to a baby sitter every weekday; their feelings are mixed. Dora doesn't like being left at all, something that I expected during the first several weeks, but I thought she'd become more accustomed to it in time. We still have frantic tears every morning. However, this morning went very smoothly and she waved goodbye happily. We think this may have been because the baby sitter was outside working in the garden when we arrived, so I didn't take her into the house before I left her. The sitter took her by the hand, they walked up to the barn to look at the horses, and we drove off.

The sitter actually has more patience than I do and insists that Marlene write out her homework neatly. The direct result of this was that Marlene got mentioned in our weekly newspaper as "Most Improved in Cursive Writing". (If you think this is a funny thing to get mentioned in a newspaper, take a look at a small community or county paper: the news is almost totally local and may include reports from correspondents in surrounding communities. In our paper the elementary and junior high schools' teachers contribute reports on what their classes are doing.)

Dave has discovered a new talent in creating brochures after making up one for the mental health clinic he wants to get started. We are just now starting to get calls from people who've seen the brochure, after a month and a half. Encouraged by positive comments, he did a brochure for his sister who is a personal fitness trainer, and has been working on one for a psychologist whose therapy style is "spiritually oriented." Right now he's working on one which describes his software installation capabilities.

We've discovered that advertising items in the newspaper is only partially successful; the end result is that you spend an awful lot of money and don't even recoup that! A notice advertising office space netted no calls at all; ones for a portable PC computer case and a fax machine were equally unsuccessful. (Now, if anyone in the APA is interested in such, just give us a call!) The ad for the 1971 Porsche did result in a flurry of excited calls, but nobody's actually bought either the car or pieces of it.

On the Zen front, Dave attended another retreat at Grailville a few weeks ago; the master who led the one he attended last year presided over this one as well. I FINALLY finished the prayer shawl I'd planned to give Dave as a Hanukkah gift; you can tell how quickly I get projects done these days! (I'm also working on a muffler for Marlene, which she requested way last winter, after I'd made a small one for Dora. It is still barely begun.) We are still trying to figure out what has led to the decline of interest in Zen in Japan itself. If any Japan scholars know, please elucidate!

School is out in another week, so we will once again be faced with the "I'm bored, what will I do?" syndrome. Marlene wants to become a businessperson and come into the office everyday. She can be quite helpful doing things like collating magazines or newsletters, sticking on stamps and stuffing envelopes. When she has enough to do, it works out quite well. We will experiment this Memorial Day Monday by hopefully having a newsletter she can put together.

Susannah

This was quite an event when Dave & I were going to Ohio State.
Anybody get a chance to take it in over Memorial Day / Marcon weekend?
6

"The Rocky Horror Picture Show" Returns to Columbus in Style

By Janeen S. DeBoard

Let's do the Time Warp again!

And now we can do it in style at the newly refurbished Graceland Cinema in Columbus, where "Rocky" has reopened after an absence of several months while the theater was being sold and remodeled.

It was worth the wait. The theater was redone in a nice '50s-style and "Rocky" runs every Friday and Saturday at midnight with a full live cast. Before each showing, the theater runs "Simpsons" cartoons, with live-action accompaniment serving as a warm-up for the cast.

Next is a real treat, at least for us old-time "Rocky" fans -- Tim Curry's video of his rock hits "Paradise Garage" and "I Do the Rock." They're great fun, especially since they don't turn up too often on MTV or VH-1.

The cast talks about the movie for a few minutes, pointing out virgins and

mentioning things like birthdays of the film cast. And on the first weekend of each month, ticket stubs are drawn for prizes like the "Rocky Horror" history/trivia book, "Creatures of the Night."

Just to make sure everyone is warmed up and ready for "Rocky," the Time Warp video is shown. Everybody is expected to get up and dance -- as the cast explains, this is an Audience Part-i-cipation movie -- and if you don't join in, you're liable to find a cast member dancing enthusiastically just inches away from you while the whole theater looks on!

Okay, now it's finally time for LIPS -- and the best live-action cast I've ever seen. They've got costumes, props, the works. It was great! It was almost closer to being at a play than at a movie; at times, the film seemed to serve as orchestration for the play going

on all around us. And the call-backs were second to none.

Though I never miss "Rocky Horror" at conventions, it had been a good many years since I'd seen it at a theater. I'd forgotten how much rice you can get pelted with -- yes, they sell Rocky Rice in the lobby -- but I'm looking forward to going back and seeing it again at Graceland.

You can catch "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" if you attend Marcon in Columbus over Memorial Day weekend. The film runs every Friday and Saturday night at midnight at the Graceland Cinema in Graceland Shopping Center, on the north side of the city at the corner of Morse Rd. and High St.

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June 1992 • Vol. 1, No. 13

My plate is too full

We signed the closing papers for our house on Friday, 15 May 1992, and I resigned from my position as Manager of the Publications Department at EMRC the following Monday. I gave two-weeks notice, and started wrapping up the projects I was working on. I also helped convince my former assistant, Kris, to return to EMRC and take the position I was vacating.

On June 1st I began my new employment, as Information Manager for Simplix. Simplix is a small start-up software firm. We (along with 18 other competitors) have a contract with the U.S. government to provide a means for GATEC. To quote from the U.S. Publication "Introduction for Interested Vendors to Government Acquisition Through Electronic Commerce (GATEC) A Department of Defense Electronic Commerce Pilot Project"

The Department of Defense (DoD) is committed to implementing electronic commerce (EC) using electronic data interchange (EDI). The Executive Agent for DoD, the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), has overall responsibility for the Electronic

Commerce/Electronic Data Interchange (EC/EDI) program within the DoD. Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) provides the lead engineering and development support for the overall DoD EC/EDI program. The Executive Agent selected the Air Force's Government Acquisition Through Electronic Commerce (GATEC) program as an electronic commerce pilot project in March 91. The GATEC pilot project will begin at the Wright Patterson Contracting Center (WPCC), Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. The start is planned for July 1992. Additional pilot sites are planned to be added to the project.

How Pilot Works

Vendors conducting business with DoD under this pilot project will do so electronically using one of the Value Added Networks (VANs) participating in the project. Via these VANs, vendors will have access to Requests for Quotation (RFQs) issued by WPCC

and future pilot sites. RFQs will be issued as "public RFQs" accessible to any interested vendor. Similarly, public award summaries will be accessible via the VANs to inform interested vendors of awards made in response to public RFQs.

Pilot project buyers may send an electronic RFQ to a specific vendor; as a public RFQ; or as both. Also, as is now the case, buyers may occasionally issue a purchase order or delivery order without competition.

Only registered vendors will be able to submit quotes in response to the RFQs via the participating VAN of their choice. Registered vendors will be able to submit quotes; exchange electronic mail with the sites; receive awards; and handle routine contract administration all through their VAN.

The project will be conducted using American National Standards Institute (ANSI) X12 standards, the widely used standard for electronic data interchange

(EDI) business transactions. Before project start, each participating VAN will be tested for compliance with these standards and the DoD convections for their use.

So as you can see, I will be learning lots of acronyms as well as doing some neat stuff. Long term, I am hoping to learn Unix. Right now I use DOS boxes to look up information on CD-fiche, do some of the accounting, and use Ventura for mass mailings, brochures and flyers. In general though, I'm trying to organize the office (not easy for a place that's so new we don't have desks yet!), and keep track of everyone's schedules.

Homewrecking 101

Destruction is fun

Gabe and I gained possession of our house June 1st, and we went right to work, getting it the way we want it. At the moment, I have visions of us being out of time and moving into a construction zone.

Our house is a 995 sq. ft. bungalow located in Royal Oak. It was built in 1949 and has one and a half baths, 3 bedrooms, a living room, kitchen and basement. Once again, I will be forcing Gabe to put his office down in the basement, while I take one of the first floor bedrooms for my office.

The kitchen is not at all what we had hoped for, and we will be redoing it from the walls up as time and money allow.

We hope to have the majority of the first floor (with the kitchen excepted) completed before we move in. Our move-in date has not yet been determined, although we would like to be moved before the end of next month.

So far we have managed to:

- rip out all of the carpeting (including the two layers of carpet in both of the downstairs bedrooms), all of the padding, and the nails, tacks, staples, and carpet tack strips used to hold the carpeting in place.
- strip off wallpaper (from the bathroom, downstairs bedrooms, hallway, and living room)
- cut out the soffit above the bathtub (thus filling the bathtub with Fiberglas insulation and scraps of wood)
- pull out both of the old bathroom vanities
- clear the attic of miscellaneous boxes and trash left by previous occupants
- remove the ugly cheap white paneling obscuring the beautiful knotty pine paneling in the upstairs bedroom
- pull up the parquet floor in the entry way

Tasks remaining (in no particular order):

- make final arrangements with the floor refinishing man
- paint the downstairs
- replace the baseboards in entire downstairs
- put a ceiling above the bathtub, patch the hole left by the "extra" vanity

- build a closet in the upstairs bedroom
- move 16' of knotty pine paneling to patch sections of the wall where paneling was replaced with drywall, and where cheap built-in dresser drawers currently are
- lay hardwood flooring in upstairs bedroom after removing linoleum tile currently down
- fix polarity and grounding problems in electrical system
- transform basement workshop into fruit cellar

What else we've been doing

Just usual, and barely at that. We both work full time jobs, come home to the condo, have some dinner, drive to the new house, and then work for as many hours as we can stand. Then we go home, take showers and then do other work. Gabe does some freelance work or works on keeping the BBS up, while I work on my computer, doing the family budget, do laundry, dishes or otherwise attempt to clean the condo, and then try to read my internet news. Around 11 or midnight we collapse into bed and try to get enough rest to be able to get up by a quarter to six and start all over again.

I hope that we will soon have the house to a point where we can rest for a while, and catch up on the things we've been putting off. And so that I will be able to put future issued to APA-Tech to bed on schedule!

Introducing: Brian Yoder

Audrey Helou

It is my pleasure to introduce Brian Yoder. Brian is an old friend from CMU, where he worked on his Master's Degree in Computer Science (despite the fact that he knew more about computers than the instructors).

Brian is employed at Symantic Corp., and his presence is one of the things Symantic gained when it bought out Peter Norton.

Brian is extremely well read, intelligent, and opinionated. His views make for thoughtful reading, and in my opinion he will make an excellent correspondent.

The following article was sent to me (with instructions to include it here) via the internet. It was written shortly after the LA Riots.

That LA Experience

Brian Yoder

**1420 North Alto Vista Blvd., Apt. 125
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(213) 876-8754**

Well, the fires are out, the looters have retired to their homes (for the moment at least) and I'm back at work. I certainly got an eyeful as I drove home on Thursday, through some of the most affected areas of the city. Actually, had I known that the violence was concentrated on my route home, I would have just stayed in a hotel through the mess.

During my drive, I passed more than a dozen raging fires (that's not counting the ones I could see in the distance). EVERY store of value (at least 30) had been broken into and many still had large crowds of looters massing around them. Let me say a

few words about who these looters I saw were and what they were up to. The most amazing thing to me was that they were so tremendously happy. Their attitude is the same kind of thing you see in commercials showing people who have just been informed that they have won the lottery. There was not one ounce of shame or fear in these people that I could see. AN example of this was the reaction they had when TV cameras appeared...they wanted to get on TV! They wanted to say "Hi Mom!" and show off their new possessions! Aside from the obvious moral depravity this implies, it also shows that there must not have been

a single person in the world before whom they would feel ashamed to be seen as a looter. No grandparents, no church leaders, no parents, no friends or coworkers could have been expected to object to looting by these people.

Another aspect of the situation I noticed was the heterogeneous nature of the looters. They were not the "poor black mob" I have been seeing them portrayed as on TV. There were plenty of non-black looters (ranging from 1% to 20% depending on the location) and a great many of the looters did not appear to be poor. Many of them were driving nice cars and were wearing nice clothes. On the freeway (which was nearly empty by LA standards by the time I was using it) had a very unusual kind of traffic. Roughly two thirds of the vehicles on the road were vans and pick-ups either full of loot (blankets over suspicious bulges in the back etc.) or empty going back for more. The drivers and passengers were expressing the same kind of "party attitude" as the other looters, playing loud music, giving the "thumbs-up" to everyone passing them, and in general enjoying their day.

At one point I passed a computer store so packed with looters that the ones inside couldn't get out with their booty, I was overcome with rage at these beasts (this was one of the first real concentrations of looters I had seen) and I started honking my horn at them with the idea being "Someone is watching you...you ought to be ashamed.". Their reaction? They WANTED someone to be watching them! They held up their booty to show me what they had stolen, as proud as can be!

Another thing I noticed was that there seemed to be two kinds of people out looting. A small number were "instigators" who were actually breaking windows, and the "opportunists" who were too timid to

break the windows, but who just wandered in and grabbed what they could. A great many of the people who appeared to be "instigators" were wearing Malcolm X hats, violent rap group T-Shirts, african revisionist history T-shirts (like the "african woman" shirts you may have seen), Louis Farakahn shirts, and the like. Clearly, the anti-white racism movement had some impact on these folks, but the vast majority just seemed to be housewives and people of "unremarkable" political activism. They were just there to "get theirs". The TV reporters interviewed several people coming out of the stores and the common reaction they seemed to have was "Everyone else is doing it, so why shouldn't I?". Some also expressed the idea that "Someone might be getting something more than me."

You might be asking "Where were the police?". Well, in the 15 miles of active law breaking and destruction, I didn't see so much as a single policeman. On that first day, there were only 400 arrests made! I personally saw THOUSANDS of looters and I was just driving through one area (Hollywood, West LA, Santa Monica, and Hancock Park) for a few minutes. The police chief and the governor admitted that this was intentional. They said that they didn't want to make the looters angry by enforcing the law! (Jesse Jackson has been repeatedly condemning the press for referring to the looters and arsonists as "thugs" and "criminals", how cruel! You might make them think that they were doing something wrong!) At one point one official even said that we have to take a balanced perspective taking the desires of the looters into account as well as those of the shopkeepers they were robbing (that was the gist of it anyway). When political considerations are made to appease the lawless rather than to protect the rights of the victims, we are really sunk.

What actions DID they take? Well, they immediately banned the sale of guns and ammunition (which were in very high demand by property owners who wanted to do for themselves what the police refused to do). They expressed outrage at the King verdict explaining that they agreed with everything the rioters were "saying". They were also busy trying to stop property owners from defending themselves from rooftops. In one case, a mall was being looted and the parking lot was filled with people trying to jam their cars with more loot (this I saw on TV, not with my own eyes). When the police finally did arrive, rather than blocking the exit and trapping the looters or even taking down license plate numbers, they just waited for the looters to leave, and then they arrested four stragglers. Who is in the business of defending rights in this case? Surely not the government!

Closer to home, just around the corner from my apartment in Hollywood, there was a looted 7-11 (which was more trashed than looted, little was apparently taken) next to a very large electronics store which had mostly been cleaned out by looters. Late in the evening the police arrived

and five or six looters left the store. They walked right past the police and the officers didn't lift a finger to stop them! Across the parking lot the same folks who had been looting were just loitering waiting for the police to leave so they could go back inside to look for scraps. They waited there even after the curfew. Again, the police did nothing. These thugs were clearly in violation of the law, and in full sight of the police and the police simply ignored them. I couldn't believe it!

I made it through this mess without a scratch, but unless something seriously changes the way the police view their job, it might not be that nice next time around. Considering the kind of concrete-bound analysis of the situation (in particular looking at the situation as being nothing but a problem of racism), and pandering to the lawless, I don't think the prospects are good. The only person I heard saying anything intelligent about the situation was Pat Buchanan. It's too bad that none of "us" could get any air-time to point out the problems and the solutions.

—Brian